

State of Tamworth Debate

19th November 2013

Introduction

This year the report will look at progress made against the corporate priorities;

- To aspire and prosper in Tamworth,
- To be healthier and safer in Tamworth.

It highlights achievements and issues backed up by performance information and public opinion gained through our consultation activities, where available.

This approach is intended to encourage debate in the Council Chamber on those things important in Tamworth.

Appendices are attached.

Appendix A Delivering the Goods Annual Report 2012-13

Appendix B Health Profile

Appendix C Feeling the Difference Survey

Appendix D Budget Consultation 2014/15

Appendix E Tamworth Listens Question Time Event Responses

To aspire and prosper in Tamworth

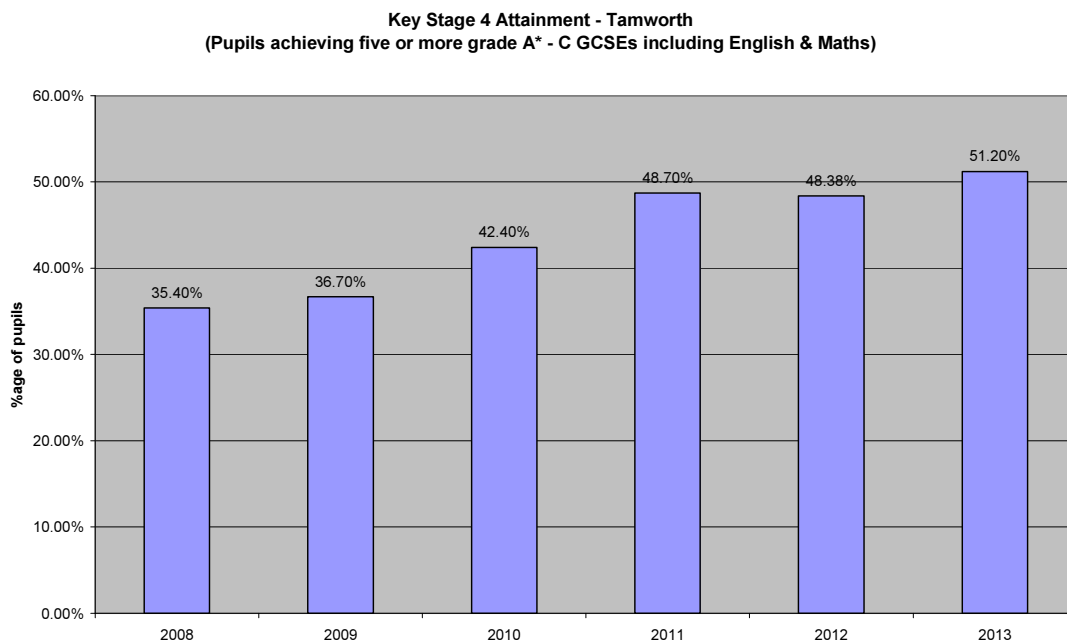
Raise the aspiration and attainment levels of young people

Good literacy and numeracy are essential to further study and employability. Improving performance in these is important as those areas with low levels of educational attainment and skills are more likely to be associated with high levels of worklessness and other socio economic issues.

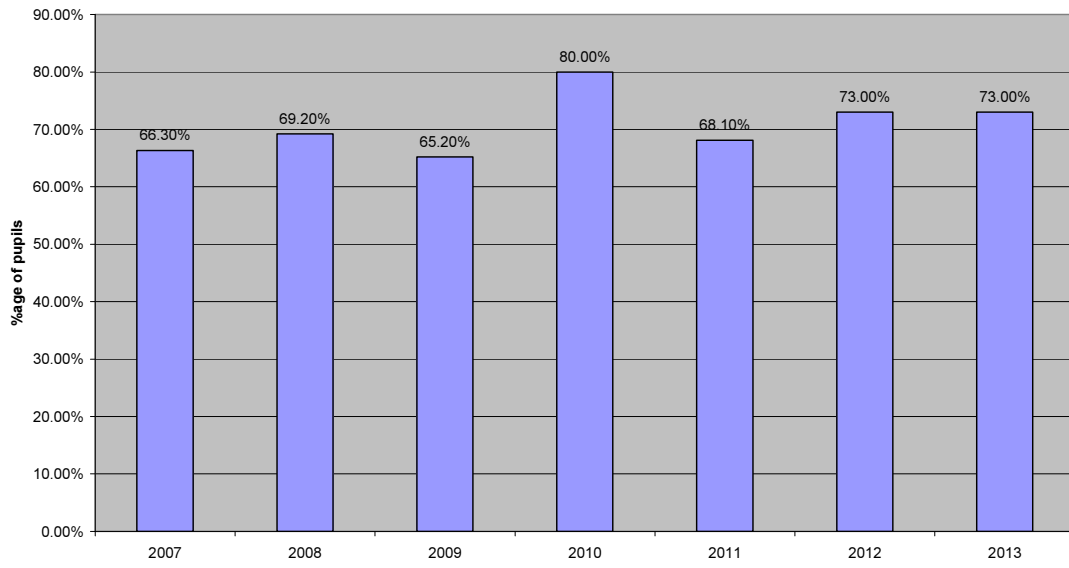
Whilst not a direct responsibility of the Council, we take a very keen interest and involvement in this important objective. Indeed, we developed, and are an active member on the Education and Skills Board and have now included education into one of the Cabinet's portfolios.

This objective was seen as important by 65% of responders to the 2014/15 budget consultation exercise. With 51% of respondents believing that good education provision is an important factor in making somewhere a good place to live. (Appendix D)

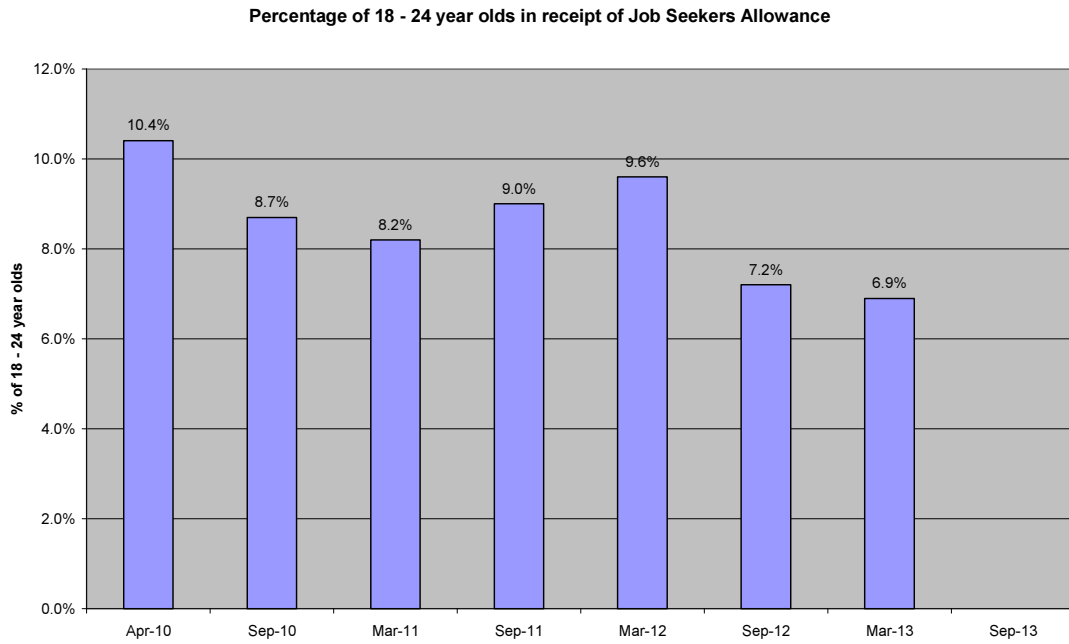
Tamworth's improving progress in both key stage 2 and key stage 4 attainments over the last few years can be seen below.



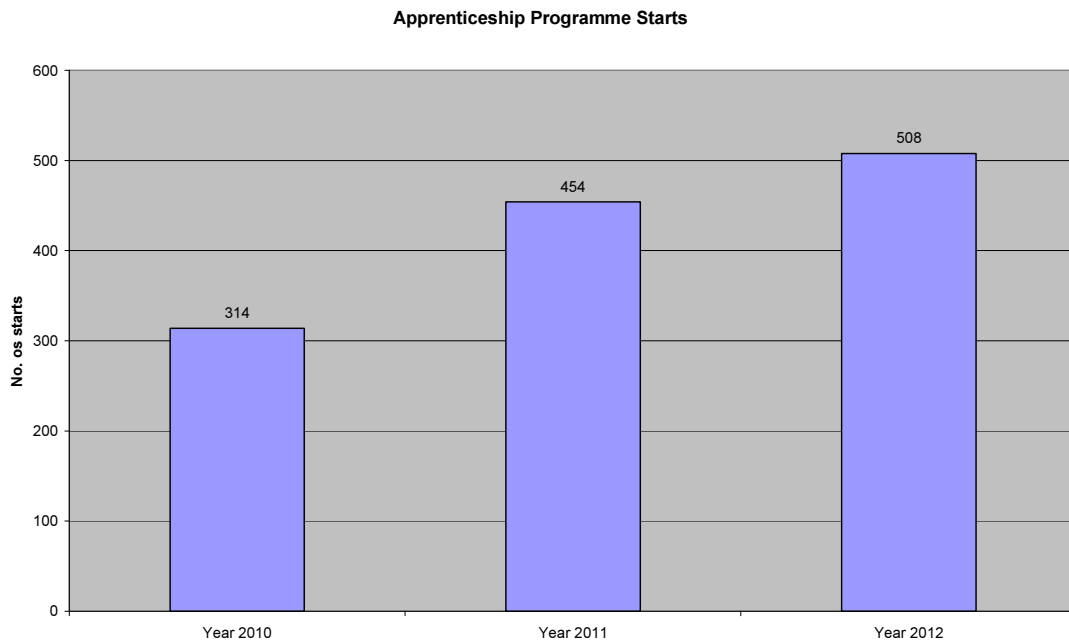
Key Stage 2 Attainment
(Pupils achieving Level 4 in reading/writing/maths)



Youth unemployment is an issue in Tamworth. However, it has fallen over the last eighteen months.



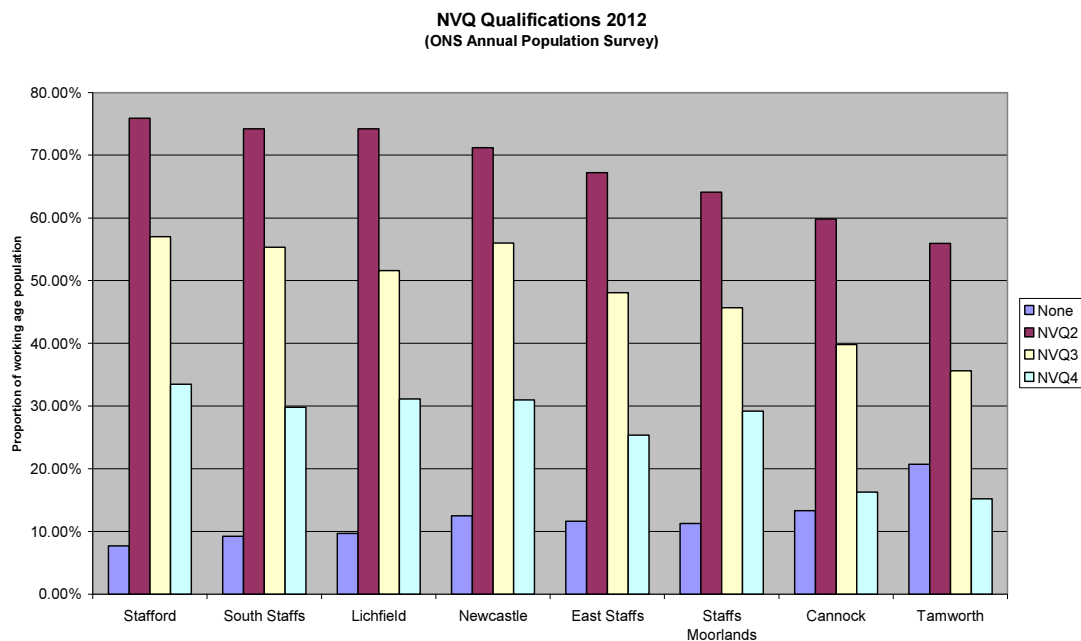
Apprenticeship programme starts show an encouraging rise.



Create opportunities for business growth through developing and using skills and talent

Although improving the educational attainment of young people in Tamworth will have substantial benefits over the longer term, tackling skills issues for the current working age population is just as important. This is to ensure that people have the right skills to access employment and in particular the higher value added jobs that are being targeted across the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent area.

This objective was seen as important by 82% of responders to the 2014/15 budget consultation exercise.

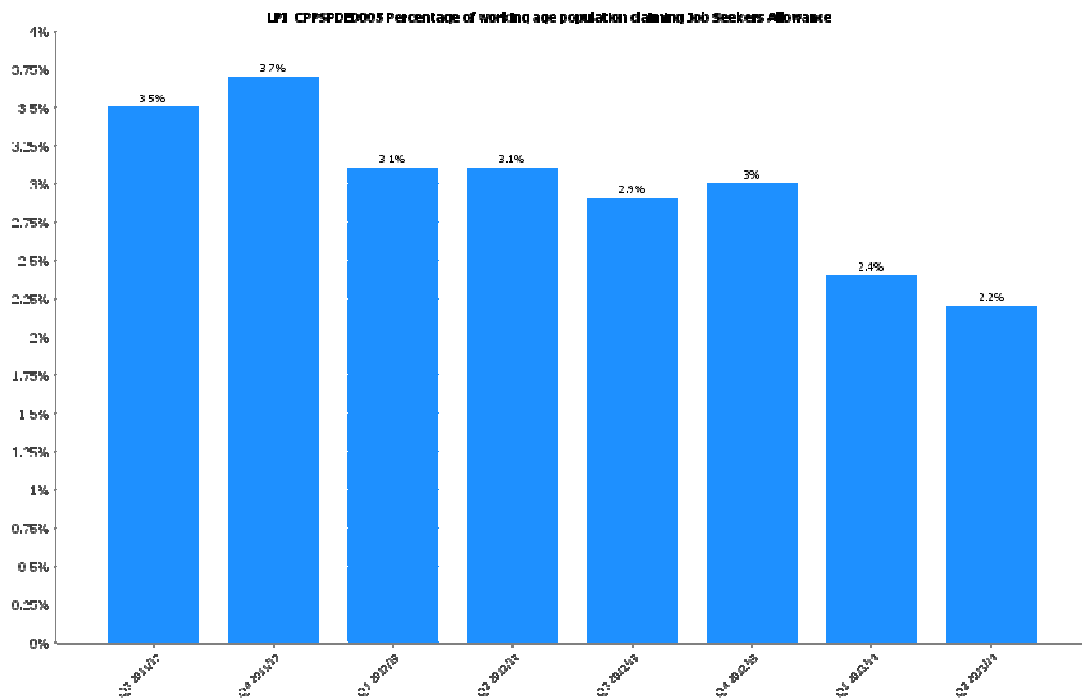


Promote private sector growth and create quality employment locally

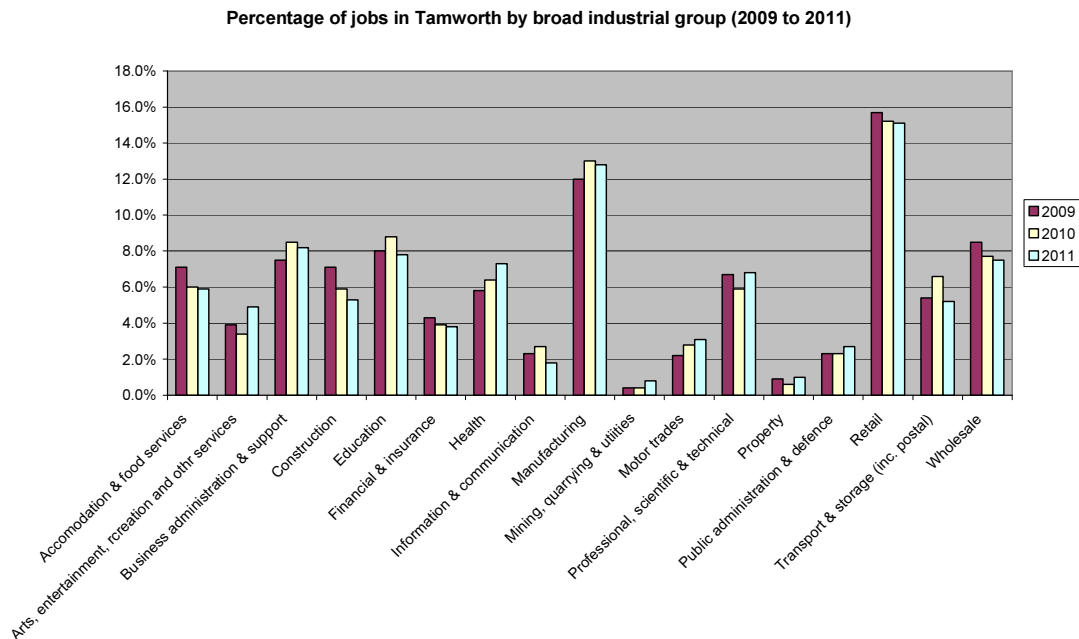
This objective was seen as important by 85% of responders to the 2014/15 budget consultation exercise, the highest under this priority. With 72% of respondents believing that good job prospects are an important factor in making somewhere a good place to live.

Claimant count is a key measure of unemployment and measures those people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance benefit (JSA).

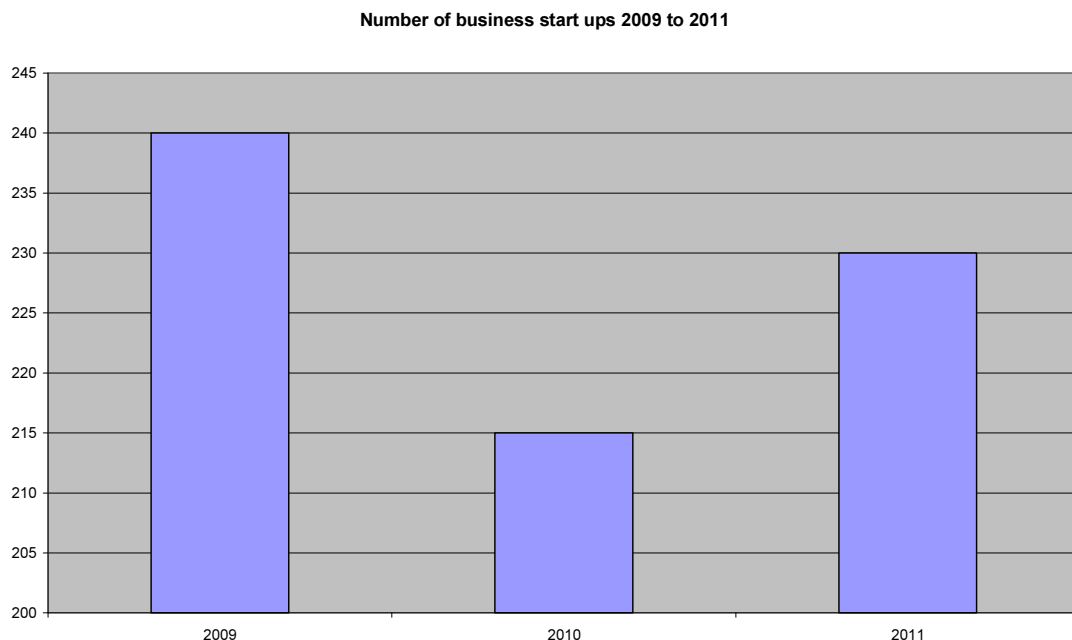
In September 2013 there were 1,103 people claiming JSA in Tamworth, 2.2% of the working age population. This was slightly higher than the county rate of 2.1%, but lower than regional (4.0%) and national (3.2%) rates. Since 2009, the overall numbers and rate have fallen and despite a slight increase in March 2012, the trend is downwards again.



In total there are around 26,200 employee jobs in Tamworth with retail and manufacturing being the main employment sectors.



After a period of decline, the number of business start ups is beginning to show improvement.



Tamworth Borough Council and Lichfield District Council operate a shared economic development and enterprise service. The service won the ‘Best All Round Small Business Friendliness’ award recognising the significant improvement in communication between the public and private sector, helping

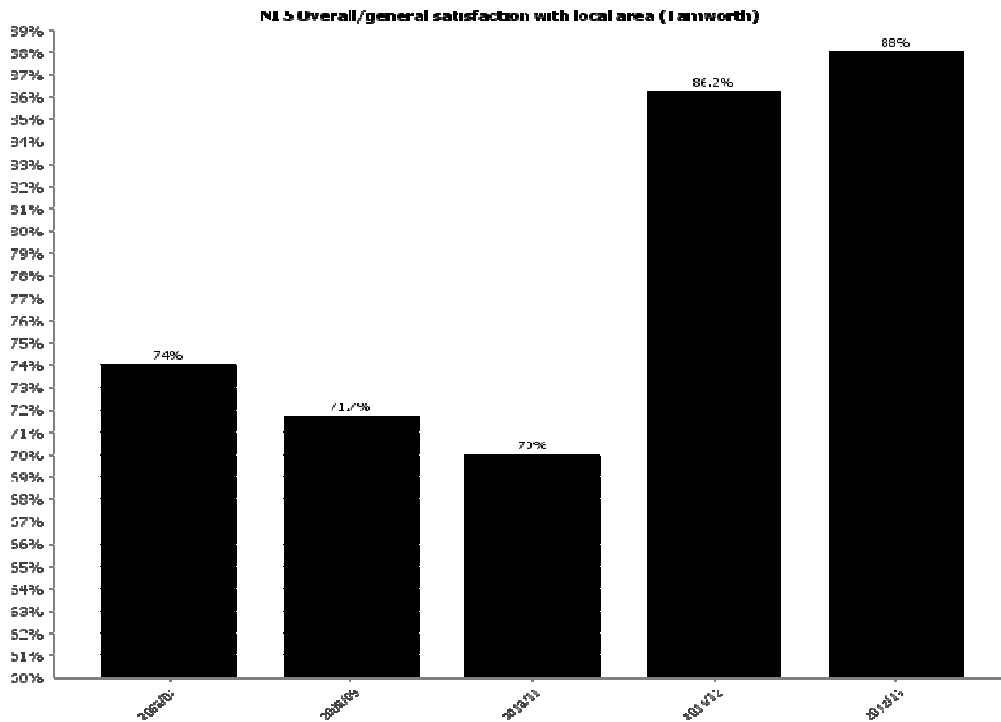
to raise local business issues and forging strong links between networks across the area.

This year has seen the specific delivery of projects and initiatives on the themes of business support, business engagement and shared strategic thinking. Examples of the work undertaken can be found in the *Delivering the Goods, Annual Report 2012/13 at Appendix A*.

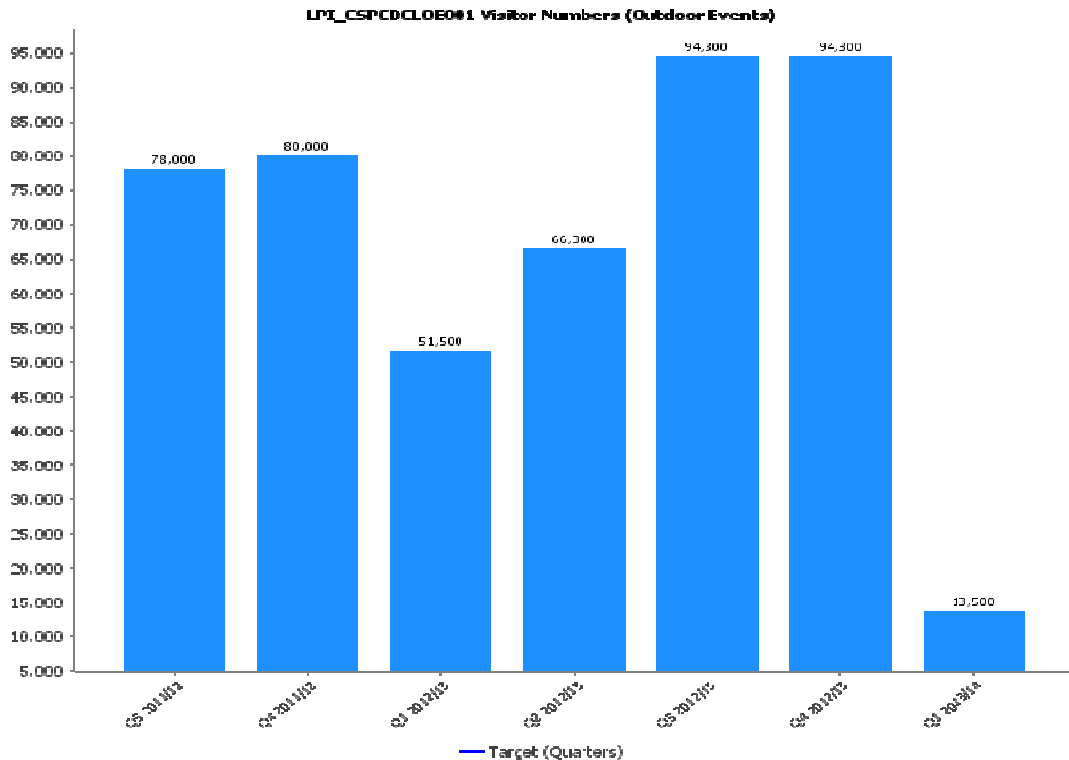
Brand and market “Tamworth” as a great place to “live life to the full”

This objective was seen as important by 49% of responders to the 2014/15 budget consultation exercise. The lowest under this priority.

In the 2012/13 Place Survey, 88% of respondents expressed overall/general satisfaction with the local area. After a period of decline, this has improved over the last few years.



Our outdoor events programme continues to attract large numbers of people, the 2012/13 visitor number figure being boosted by our hosting of the Olympic Torch Relay. Importantly, visitor satisfaction rates with these events have not dropped below 98% for three years.



Tamworth Borough Council plays its part in Destination Tamworth which is Tamworth's Town Team. Its main area of focus is to engage with local businesses, commercial landlords, service organisations and residents to support the wide programme being delivered through Tamworth Borough Council. This organisation is currently drafting a business and marketing plan.

Create the physical and technological infrastructure necessary to support the achievement of this primary outcome.

This objective was seen as important by 62% of responders to the 2014/15 budget consultation exercise.

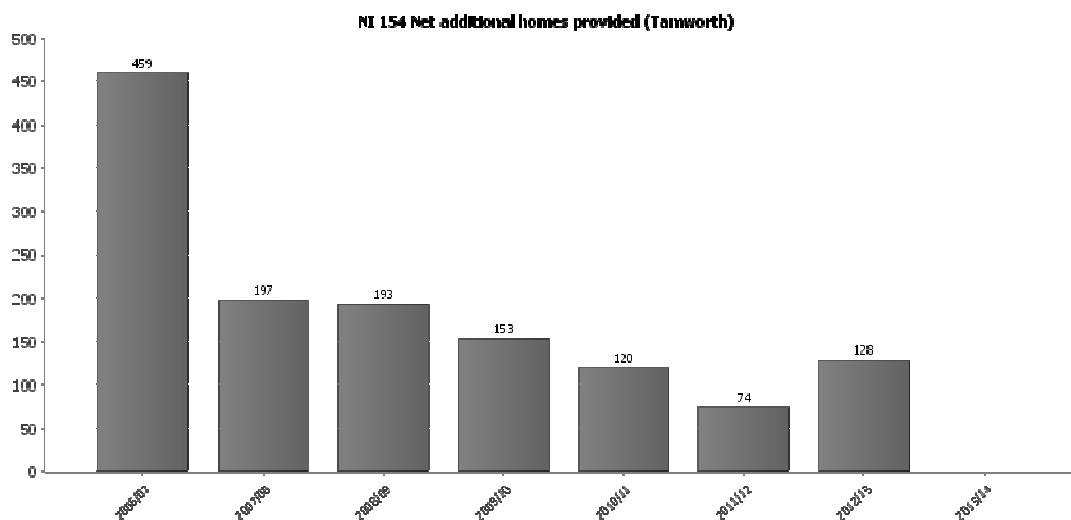
In October, Tamworth's first ever question time event was held. (Appendix E). One of the themes of this was 'the future of the Town Centre'.

This prompted long debate amongst the panel and audience. There was agreement that it is no longer feasible for the former Gungate precinct site to be the area for a multi-million pound retail unit. Instead a combination of housing, niche retail and soft leisure would give the town what it wants and needs and provide the landowner with a return on their investment. This will result in people using the town centre and bring a living community back into it. Within that residential offer, there needs to be provision for our ageing population by way of sheltered housing and flexi care schemes as well as providing 1 and 2 bed properties for the young.

There was also debate on Tamworth having its own Saxon Village to act as a tourist attraction, sitting alongside the current heritage offer. There is no money at this present time to fund such a scheme as budgets are focussed on delivering the priority services that residents require.

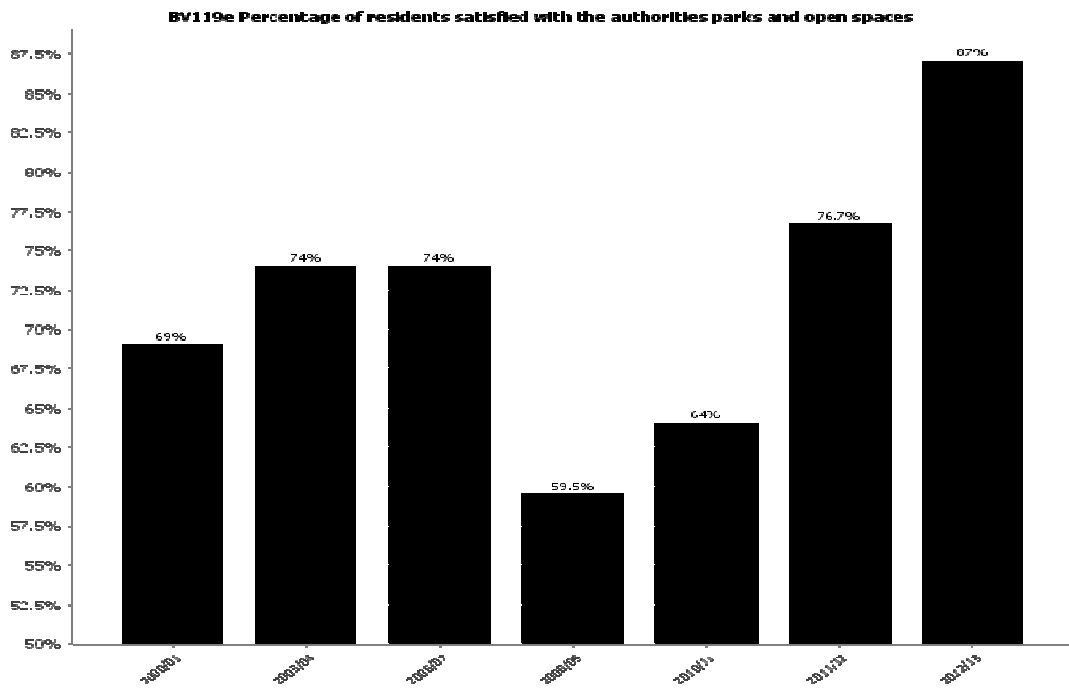
The provision of housing is an important part of this objective but the level of house building had decreased between 2007 and 2011. This is a likely consequence of the recession and the fall in the housing market and is not an issue unique to Tamworth.

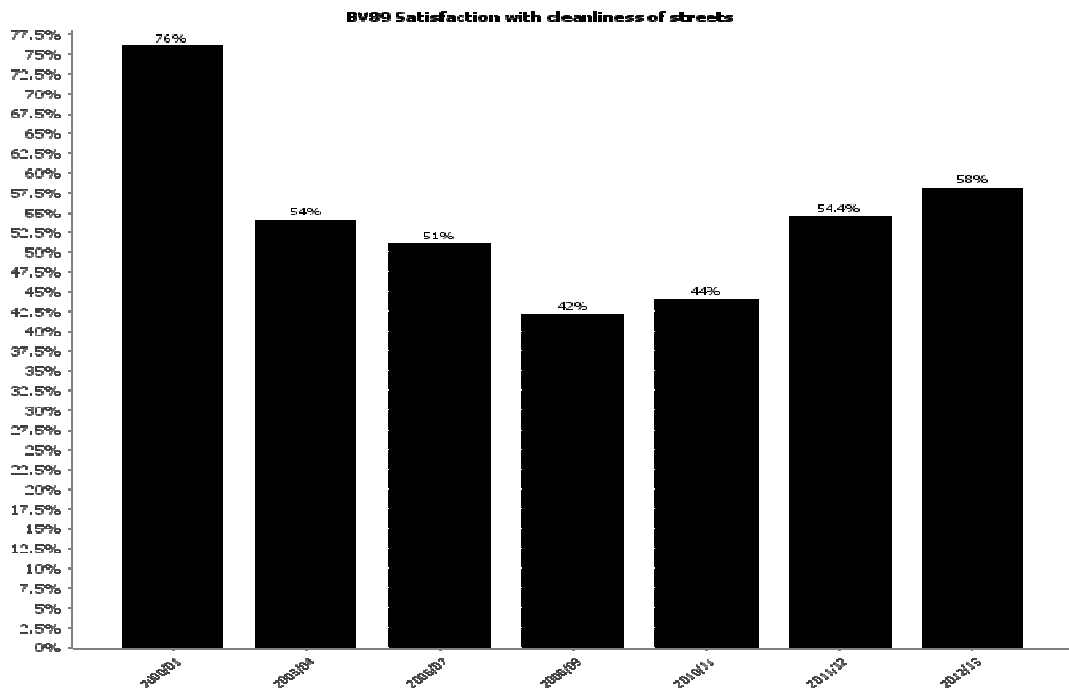
In the budget consultation 2014/15 exercise 46% of respondents thought that more money should be spent on the provision of housing services.



The condition of our area is an important factor in this objective. The two graphs below, measured over the years by our place survey, shows residents' growing satisfaction with parks and open spaces and street cleanliness after a short period of decline.

In the budget consultation 2014/15 exercise 46% of respondents thought that more money should be spent on street cleaning and 27% thought more should be spent on parks and open spaces.





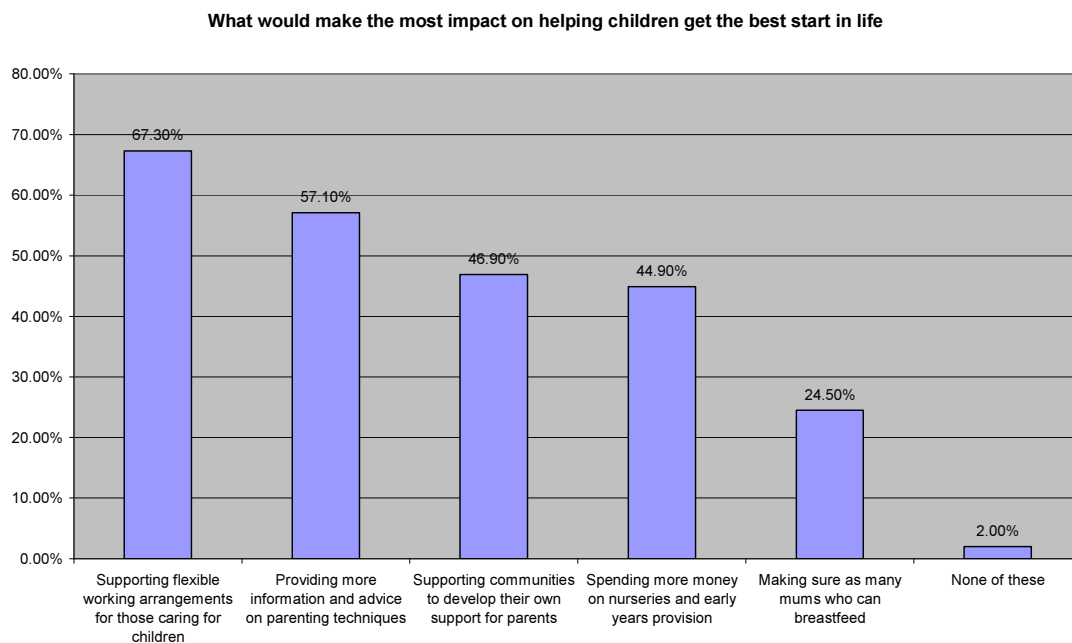
To be healthier and safer in Tamworth

Address the causes of poor health in children and young people

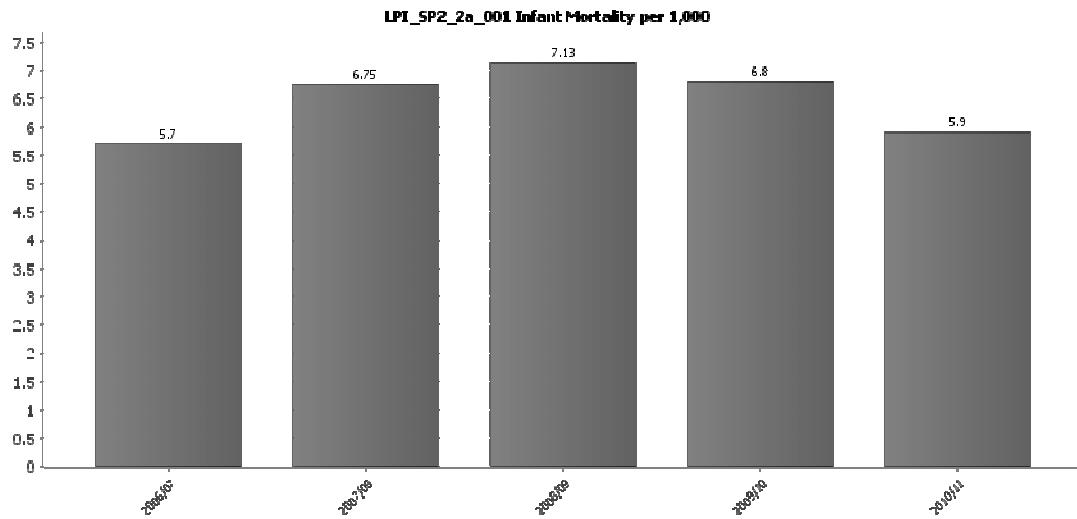
This objective was seen as important by 69% of responders to the 2014/15 budget consultation exercise

In August 2013, Staffordshire County Council, in conjunction with all districts under took consultation on its Health and Wellbeing strategy. Tamworth contributed almost a quarter of the total county replies.

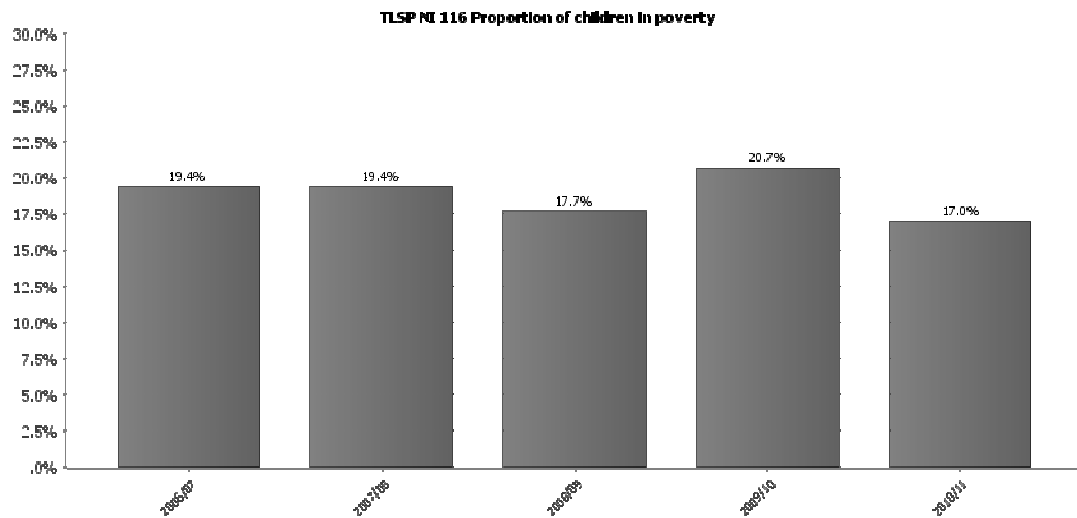
In this consultation the question was asked “what do you think would make the most impact on helping children get the best start in life?” The most popular choice was supporting flexible working arrangements for those caring for children. The graph shows the level of support for the other choices



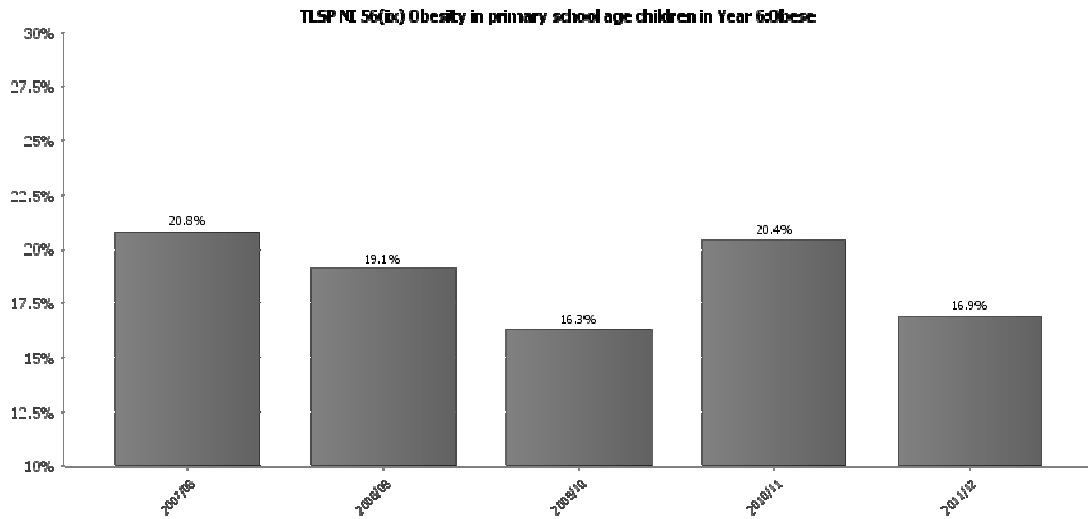
The rate of infant mortality has improved in recent years



And the proportion of children (under 16) in families receiving means tested benefits and low income is slowly improving and lower than the England average of 21.1%



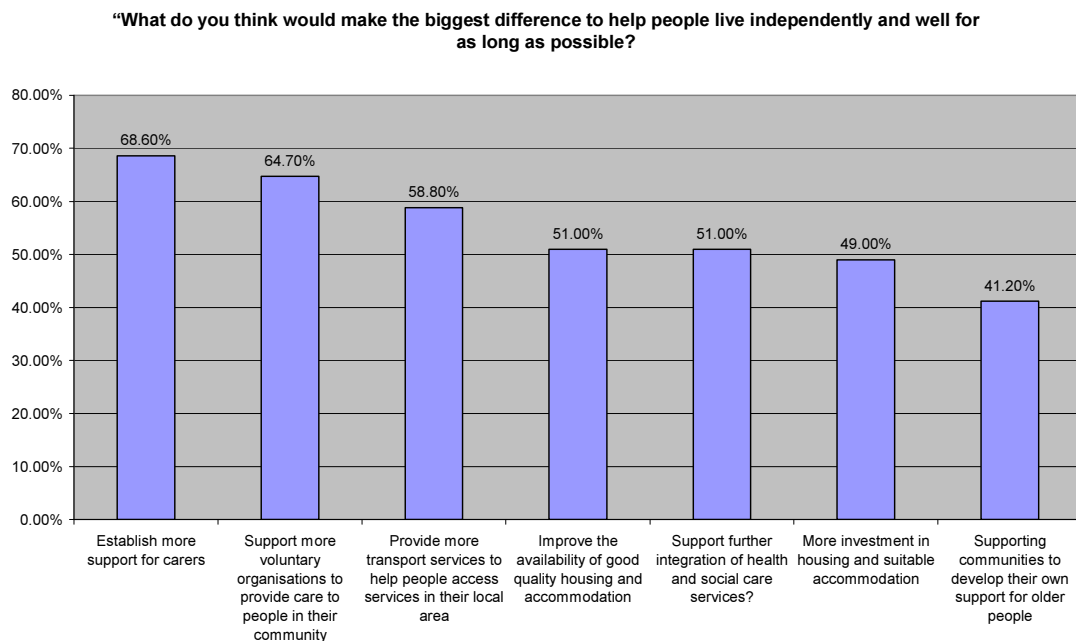
Obesity is a significant public health issue as it impacts on a person's quality of life. Obesity in children is showing improvement amongst year 6 schoolchildren.



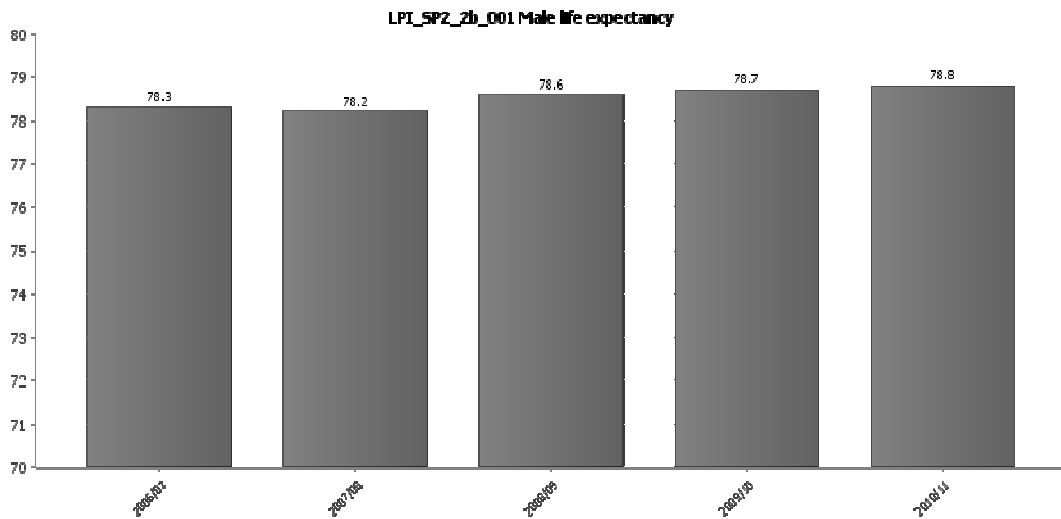
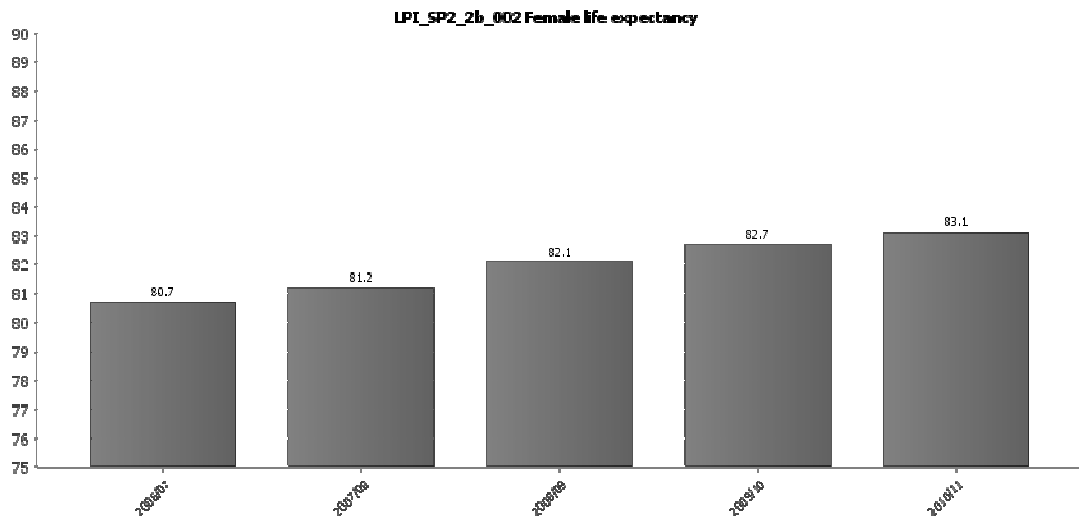
Improve the health and well being of older people by supporting them to live active, independent lives

This objective was seen as important by 69% of responders to the 2014/15 budget consultation exercise

In the Health and Wellbeing strategy consultation the question was asked “What do you think would make the biggest difference to help people live independently and well for as long as possible?” The most popular choice was establish more support for carers. The graph shows the level of support for the other choices



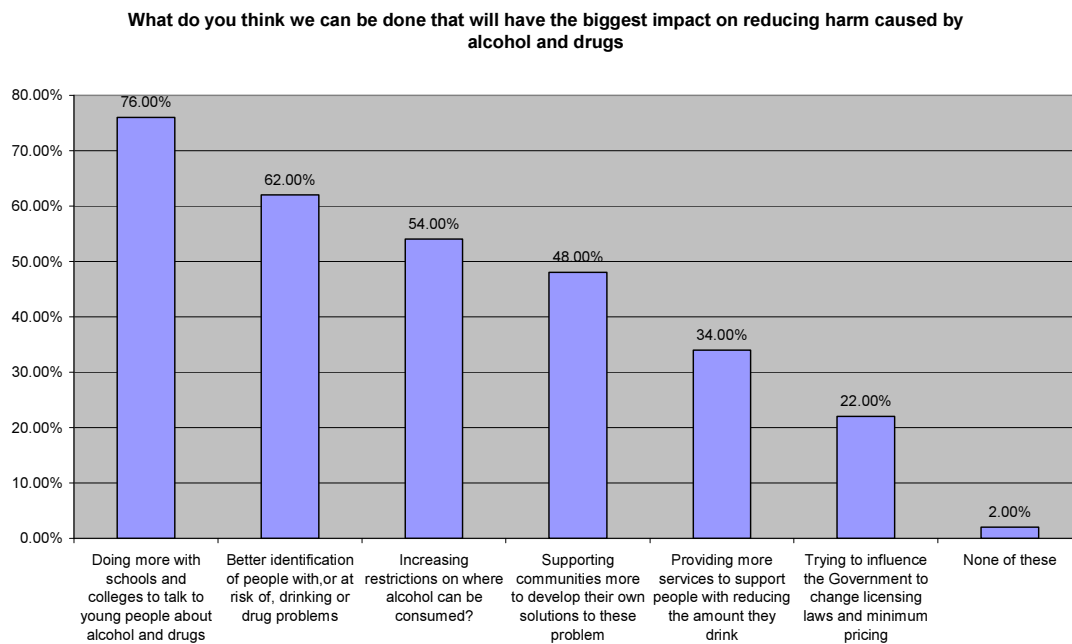
The overall health of people has improved over the past decade; people are living longer. Life expectancy for a female is 83.1 (compared to 82.9 nationally) and a male is 78.8 (compared to 78.9 nationally).



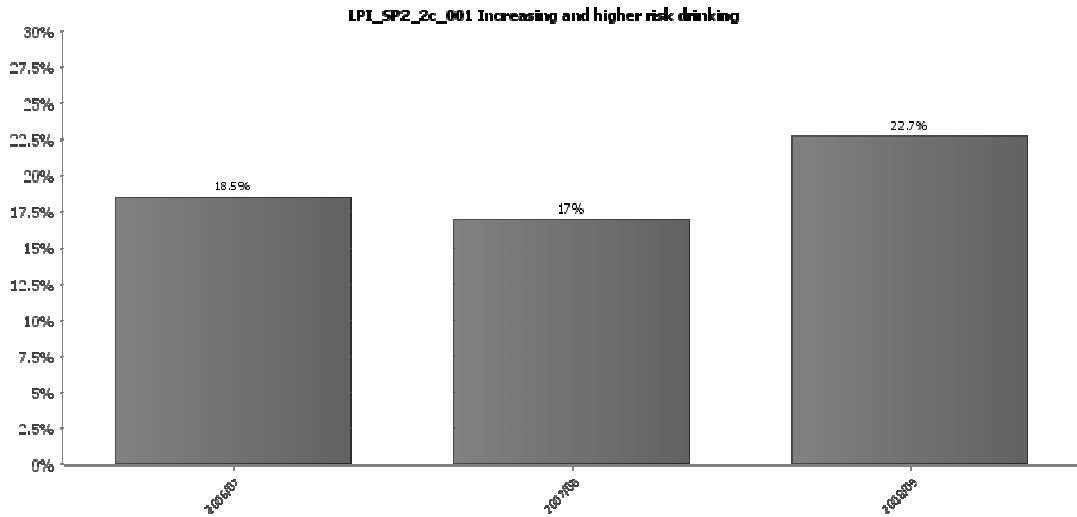
Reduce the harm and wider consequences of alcohol abuse on individuals, families and society

This objective was seen as important by 59% of responders to the 2014/15 budget consultation exercise

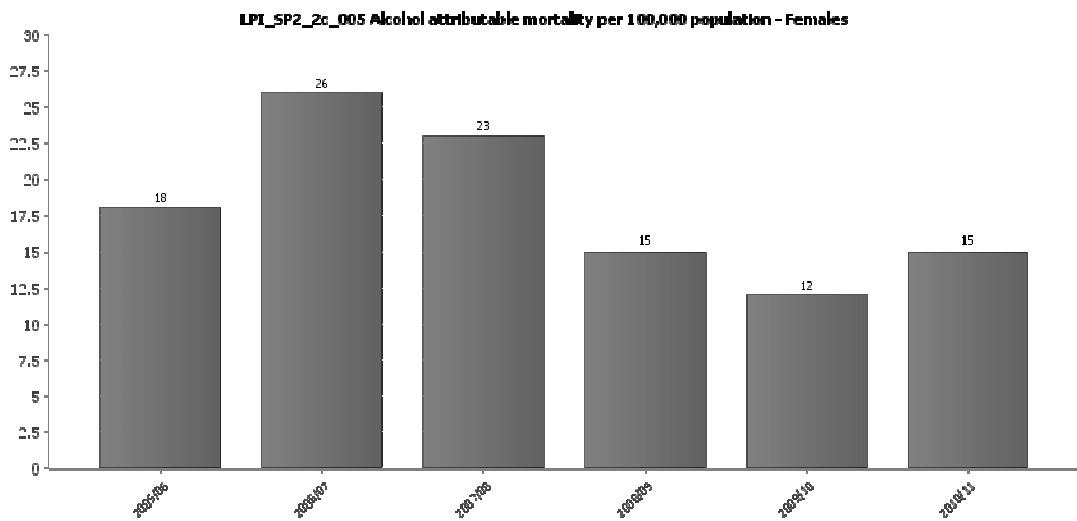
In the Health and Wellbeing strategy consultation the question was asked. "What do you think we can do that will have the biggest impact on reducing harm caused by alcohol and drugs". The most popular choice was doing more with schools and colleges to talk to young people about alcohol and drugs. The graph shows the level of support for the other choices.

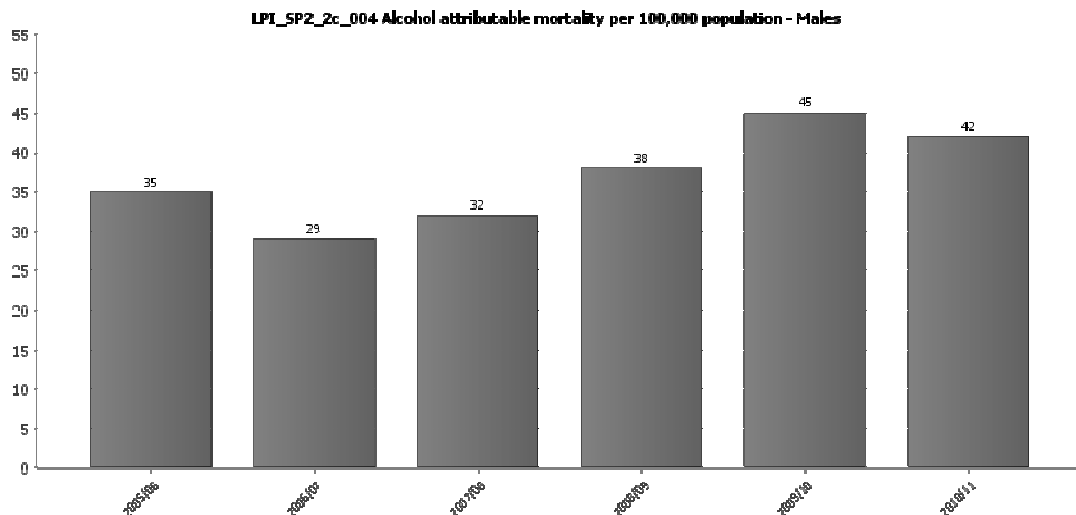


Reducing the impact to the individual, community and society caused by alcohol misuse is an important objective as it impacts not only on health but also crime and anti-social behaviour. The latest available figures show that in Tamworth 22.7% of adults are at risk from drinking (compared to 22.3% nationally)



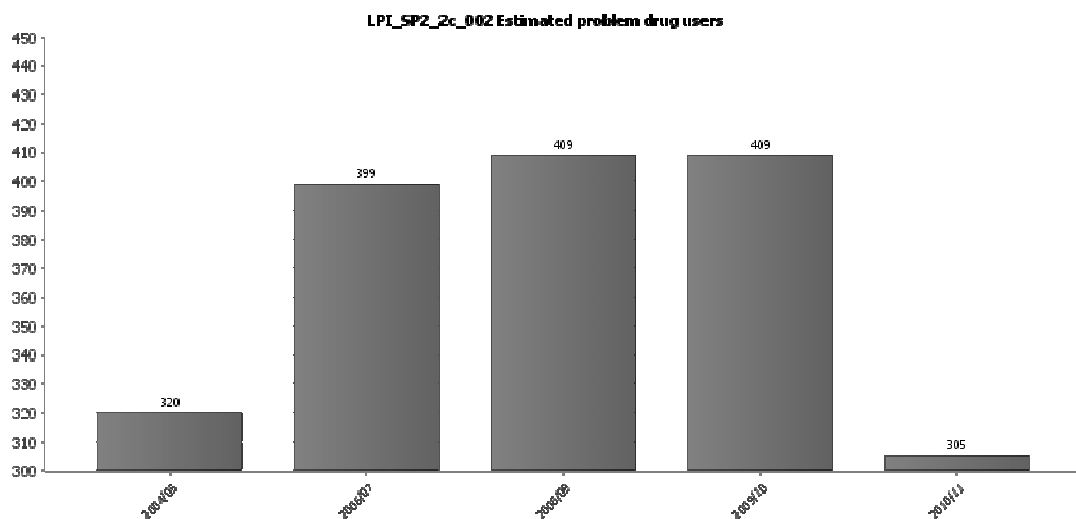
Alcohol attributable mortality is a measurement of the effects of alcohol and whilst there is improvement amongst women, it is declining for men





The past year has seen the Council and partners undertaking joint initiatives in this area, including Operation TARPA and working with curriculum leads in secondary schools which targeted youngsters, and an awareness event more tailored to adults.

The estimated numbers of problem drug users in Tamworth has shown some improvement recently with the latest figures showing a return to a level lower than that in 2004/05.

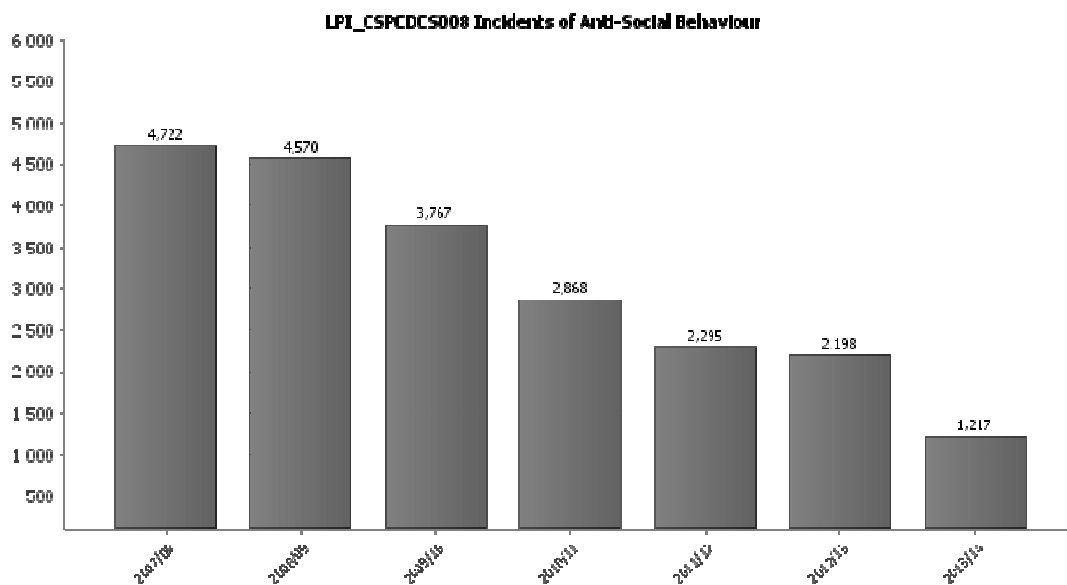


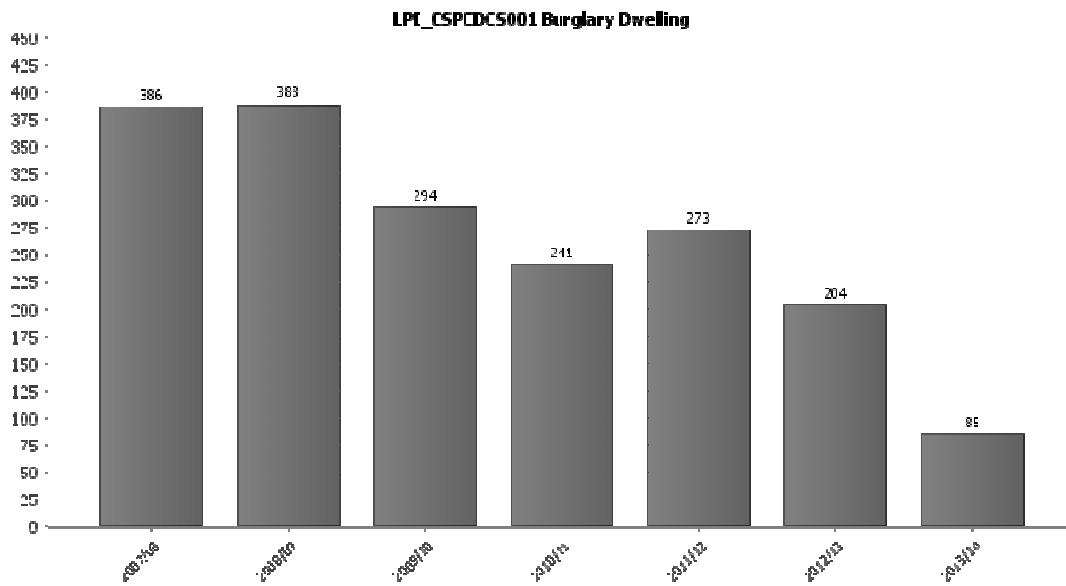
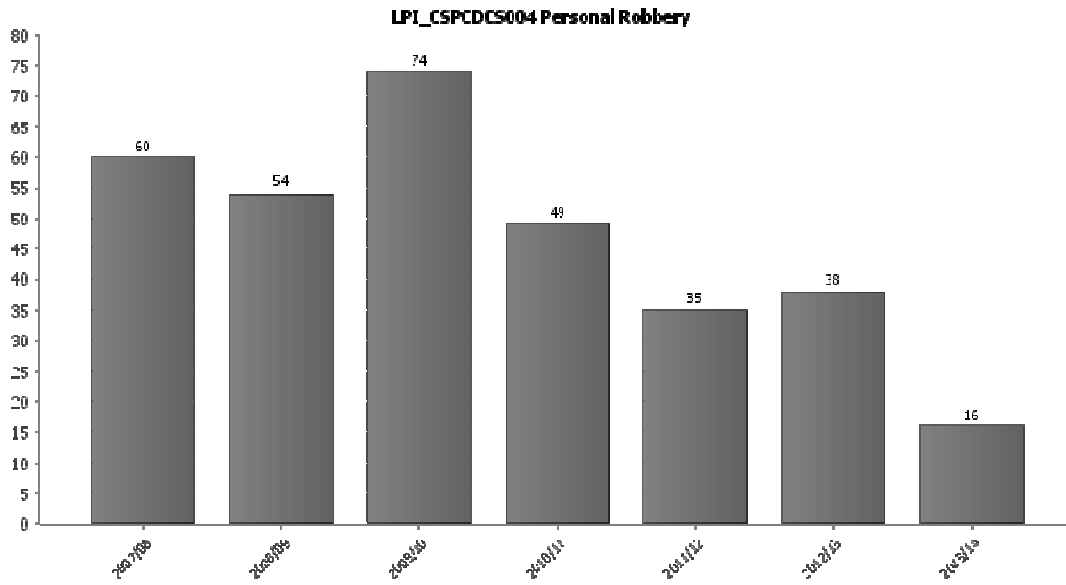
Implement 'Total Place' solutions to tackling crime and ASB in designated localities and Develop innovative early interventions to tackle youth crime and ASB

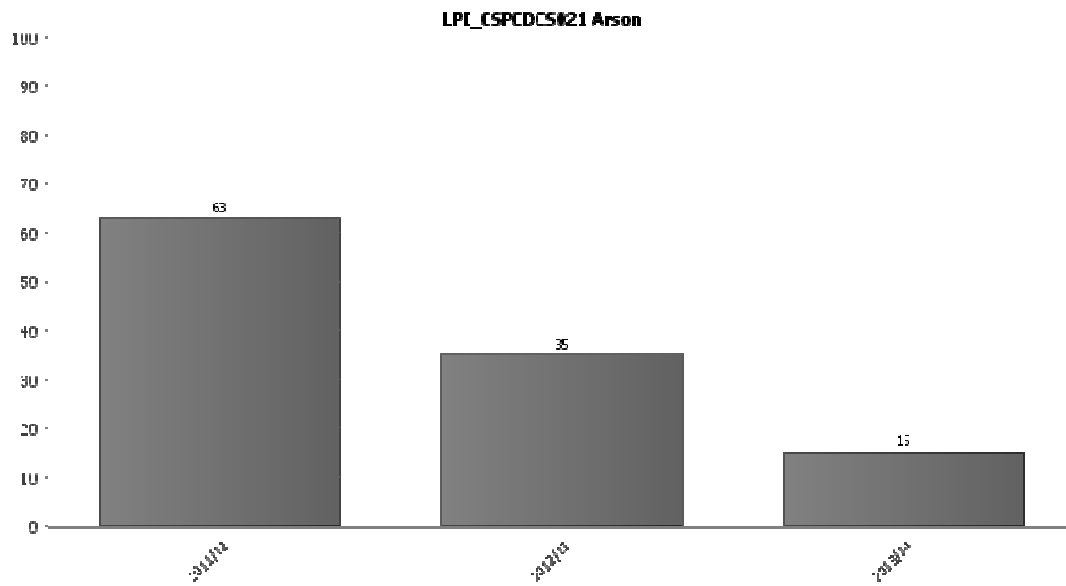
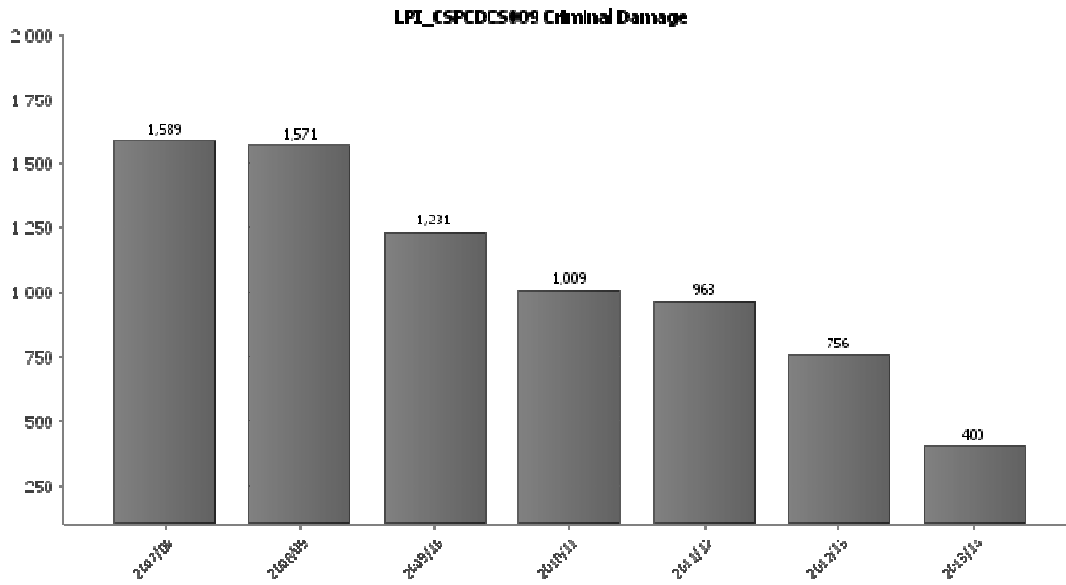
Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour objective was seen as important by 83% of responders to the 2014/15 budget consultation exercise and developing innovative early interventions to tackle youth crime and ASB was seen as important by 81% of responders to the 2014/15 budget consultation exercise.

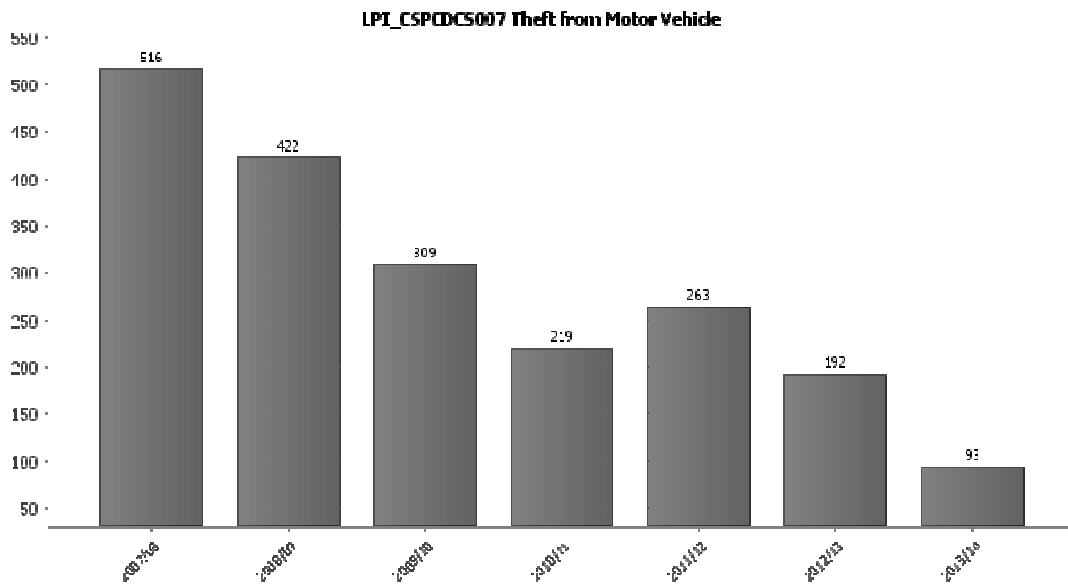
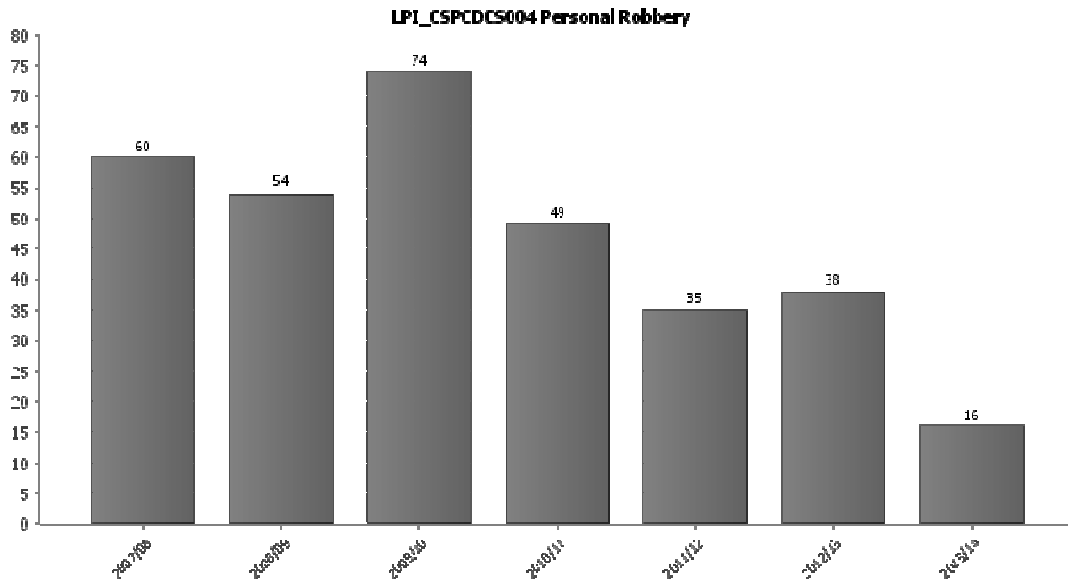
Tamworth is getting safer; recorded crime figure show this. The graphs that follow show this improving picture.

At the Question Time event, 'Safer Tamworth' was one of the themes discussed. It was pointed out that whilst the figures below show crime in Tamworth is falling, in the future, rather than rely on these statistics, the Police will seek to gain more views from the communities and are looking at extended engagement with residents to gain a more rounded view of the issues that are important to them.

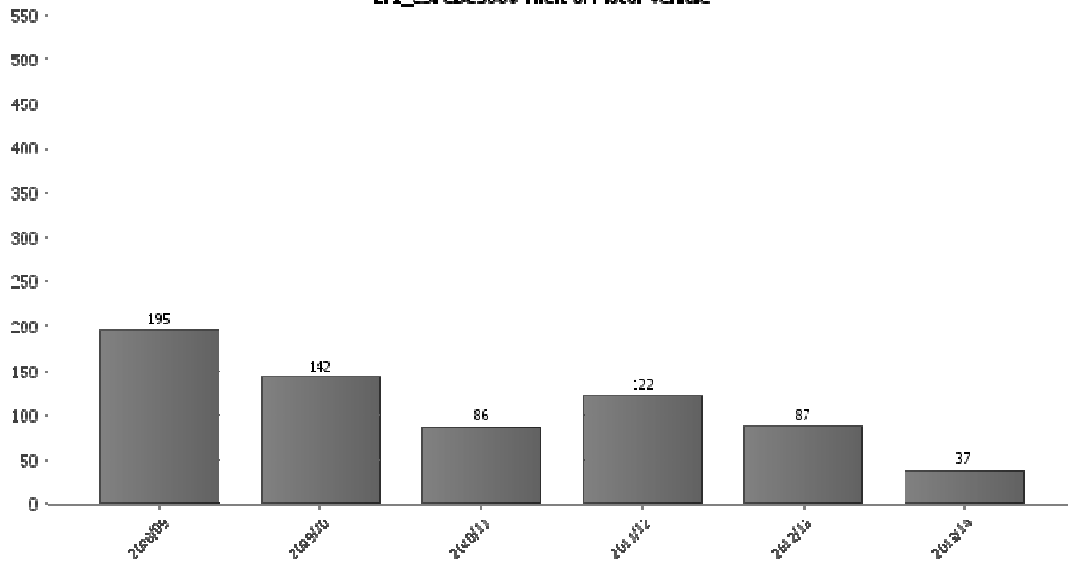




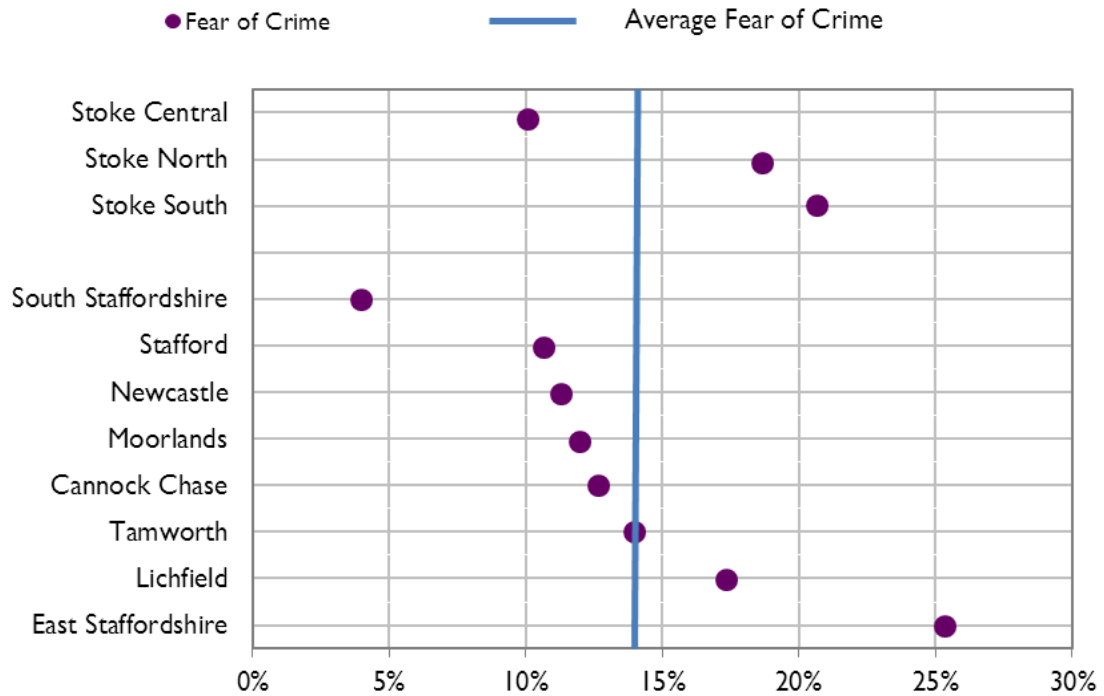




LPI_CSPDCS006 Theft of Motor Vehicle



People's perception of crime is improving too. The latest 'Feeling the Difference' survey carried out in November 2012 (see Appendix C) shows Tamworth very favourably although there is still a perception of being a victim of crime amongst those surveyed. The graph below shows how this compares to other Staffordshire authorities.



Create an integrated approach to protecting those most vulnerable in our local Communities

This objective was seen as important by 81% of responders to the 2014/15 budget consultation exercise.

Tamworth has produced the best results in the County under the Troubled Families Agenda, with 142 families identified as having certain criteria including crime, anti-social behaviour, attendance at school and worklessness, being assisted. This is a result of

- its strong partnership work through the existing Community Safety Hub and a focus on this agenda,
- The links to other services such as employment support are key and have helped get people back into work. The Chief Executive is chair of the County Leadership Board and Tamworth is effectively engaged at the project level.

The number of looked after children in the area of East Staffs and Tamworth by the through care team is 66 and the permanency team is 83.

In 2011/12, 81 adults were subject to adult protection referrals.

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